

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 AMMAN 03896 260708Z

16
ACTION SS-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8629
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S E C R E T AMMAN 3896

EXDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGS: PFOR MASS JO US SA
SUBJECT: JORDAN AIR DEFENSE

REF: JIDDA 5072

1. KING CALLED ME TO HIS OFFICE JULY 25 FOLLOWING
RETURN FROM TEHRAN. HE ASKED WHAT I COULD TELL
HIM ABOUT ANY NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HAWK DEAL.
2. EARLIER ON EVENING OF JULY 24 LOCAL SAUDI AMBASSADOR
HOD TOLD ME THAT HIS COUNTRY HAD INFORMED JORDAN IT
WAS PREPARED TO PROVIDE \$540 MILLION FOR THE HAWK DEAL OVER
FIVE YEARS. ALSO EX-PRIME MINISTER RIFAI HAD MENTIONED
THE SAME THING TO ME ON JULY 23.
3. I TOLD THE KING THAT WE HAD BEEN INFORMED BY THE
SAUDIS THAT THEY HAD TOLD JORDAN SAUDI ARABIA WOULD
PAY \$540 MILLION FOR THE HAWK DEAL, BUT THAT THEY WANTED
TO DO SO OVER FIVE YEARS, PAYING \$180 MILLION DURING THE
FIRST TWO YERS AND \$360 MILLIN DIVIDED EQUALLY OVER
THE NEXT THREE.
4. I ALSO TOLD THE KING I HAD NO REACTION FROM
WASHINGTON TO THIS PROPOSAL BUT GAVE HIM MY PERSONAL THOUGHT
THAT WE WERE NOW DEALING WITH A QUESTION OF CREDIT FORTHE
SAUDIS WHICH MIGHT POSSIBLY EVEN BE MET FROM US COMMERICAL

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SOURCES OR THE US EXPORT-IMPORT BANK. THEREFORE

WHILE DETAILS WERE STILL UNCERTAIN I HAD HOPES THAT THE FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF THE DEAL COULD BE WORKED OUT. HOWEVER I CAUTIONED HIM THAT I WAS STILL AWAITING AN OFFICIAL WASHINGTON REACTION TO WHAT THE SAUDIS HAD TOLD US

5. THE KING SEEMED EXTREMELY PLEASED BY THIS NEWS AND SAID HE HOPED WE COULD HELP WIND UP THE DEAL QUICKLY. HE THEN REFERRED TO THE FACT THAT HE HAD COME BACK FROM TEHRAN TO FIND HE HAD VERY SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS IN THE COUNTRY, PARTICULARLY RELATED TO FINANCES. AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF A SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE HAWK DEAL WITH SAUDI ARABIA WOULD HELP IMPROVE ARMY MORALE IMMESASURABLEY, WHILE SOME EARLY US HELP IN BUDGET SUPPORT (SEPTTEL) WOULD ALSO BE VERY IMPORTANT TO HIM IN MEETING HIS IMMEDIATE FINANCIAL NEEDS. PICKERING

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